

THE EXCEPTIONS

EXHIBIT 11

DATE 2/16/15

HB 3425

When I was little I was molested for eight years by my stepfather. He was an accomplished liar and fooled everyone, even my mom. No one knew. I was afraid to tell anyone; when you grow up hearing that bad things will happen if anyone finds out, you believe it. Especially when the person telling you these things is supposed to be one of the people who cares most for you.

I became pregnant for the first time when I was 12. I was scared, and I told him. He hurt me and then loaded me up on drugs, telling my mom that I had been injured while out playing with some of the other kids. He killed my baby. Of all the things that happened to me, this is what haunts me the most. I will never know who my child might have become. My only hope is in the promise I will get to see him or her in Heaven when I get there, and Jesus will care for my child until then.

When I was 13 I became pregnant again. This time I did not say anything to him. My mom noticed that my body was changing, even though I was only about two months along at that time, and questioned me about it. I finally found the courage to reveal my secret and told her everything. She immediately packed up my brother, sister, and myself and took us to our aunt's house. From there she called the police. They arrested him and took us to the hospital for some tests, and then we had to go in for questioning ourselves. In the end, he was sentenced to ten years in prison for molesting not only me, but my little sister as well.

I was told by therapists, friends, teachers, family, and even strangers that it would be best if I had an abortion and moved on with my life. But I couldn't do it. Earlier that year I had learned in my science class that a child's DNA comes from both parents, and that meant that this child was also half mine. I also decided that since I was the one who would carry her in my body for the next several months, that made her mine, not his. I knew from my first abortion that he wouldn't want me to have this baby. I knew if I repeated that mistake, I would be doing as he wished, and he would win again. He would not only have destroyed my innocence and murdered my first child, he would have killed my daughter as well.

It may have been easier to choose an abortion. There are many things that I would not have had to go through. It was harder than I have words to describe. But there are some things in life that are worth fighting for, and she was one of them.

I'm not a very big person: 5'0" and 95 lbs. I wasn't any bigger then. Due to my size and age I was deemed a high-risk pregnancy. I had my first ultrasound at around three months, where I got to see her for the first time. I heard her heart beating and fell in love. That was when I decided that I couldn't bear to give her up for adoption.

THE EXCEPTIONS

The next several months were hard. The looks and comments that I received from people were difficult to deal with, to say the least. I lost all but two of my friends. Knowing that I would soon have that little girl is what kept me going. I decided to name her Josey Ann, after a character in a book that I had read.

On Friday, July 28, 1995, roughly six weeks before my due date, I went into labor. I was flown from Vernal, Utah to Primary Children's Hospital in Salt Lake City. They gave me some drugs to slow down the labor (my water had yet to break), and steroids to help develop my little girl a little faster so she would have a better chance at survival. She was born the following Monday, July 31. She weighed 4 lb. 2 oz. and was 18" long.

Because she was premature and needed a great deal of care they kept her in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. She stayed until the end of August. Word cannot express the joy I felt when we got to bring her home the day before I started the 7th grade.

I still had nightmares, but I would wake up and have that little smiling face to greet me. When I would get nasty looks and comments, I would go home and hear her giggle. She truly was a light in one of the darkest times of my life. I shudder to think of what that time would have been like had I aborted her.

My mom was amazing; she watched my daughter so that I could finish school. I did graduate, and was my class Historian. I met a wonderful man who loves both me and my daughter, and we now have four amazing children. I have recently obtained my Associate's degree in Medical Science, and am going to be starting on earning my Bachelor's in the near future. I spend a great deal of time helping girls and women in situations like the one I was in. I have yet to meet one who regrets keeping their child, yet know of dozens whose abortions haunt them for years afterward.

Josey is nearly 20 now, and has recently blessed me with my first grandchild. She is one of the most beautiful and intelligent people I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. She is a valuable, contributing member of society, and those who know her cannot fathom life without her in it. She is one of the many reasons why I know that abortion is wrong. She is a person, and has been since she was conceived. Had I aborted her, this world would have lost an amazing person. My heart breaks for each child that is killed before he or she has a chance to bring someone the same joy that my daughter has brought me. Seeing her does not remind me of the horror of my childhood. She reminds me of God's love, and how He can bring beauty from the ashes.

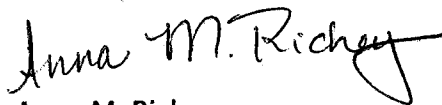
To anyone who is reading this, please know that abortion does not un-rape a woman. It has been observed that abortion often hides the crimes of rapists and pedophiles, allowing them to continue abusing women and children for years. Telling a woman that she is not strong enough to handle a pregnancy after rape is not empowering or sympathetic. It is the absolute

THE EXCEPTIONS

worst thing that could be said to someone in that position. These women already feel weak and broken. Don't tell them what they can't do; tell them that they can.

In closing, I would like to ask a simple question: I can tell the difference between a rapist and a baby...can you?

Sincerely,



Anna M. Richey

315 Harmony Rd.

Kalispell, MT 59901

(406) 407-5088